

First Indian Biodiversity Congress to be held in T'Puram

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THE first Indian Biodiversity Congress (IBC-2010) and Expo will be held here in December. Organised by the Centre for Innovation in Science and Social Action (CISSA), Kerala State Biodiversity Board, University of Kerala and Navadanya, IBC-2010 will be held on Kerala University Campus, Kariavattom, from December 27 to 31.

The mega event will have presentations by the delegates in 10 parallel sessions. Leading international experts and biodiversity experts in the country will participate in the event. Around 1,500 delegates, represented by a cross-section of people working in the biodiversity and related topics in the country, including leading scientists and researchers, NGOs, bureaucrats, policy makers, community members and conservationists, are expected to participate in the Congress.

The Indian Biodiversity Expo, that will be open to public, will showcase the rich biodiversity heritage of the country and will present a kaleidoscopic spectacle of the variety of life in the country. Na-

tion Biodiversity Authority, State Biodiversity Boards, Research and Development Centres, Universities and commercial firms will participate.

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The organising committee of IBC-2010 has Chief Minister V S Achuthanandan and Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh as chief patrons. The other patrons include Union Minister of State for Agriculture K V Thomas, Food and Civil Supplies Minister C Divakaran, Education Minister M A Baby, Forest Minister Binoy Viswam, Agriculture Minister Mulkara Ratnakaran, Shashi Tharoor MP and National Biodiversity Board chairman Dr P L Gautam.

Renowned biodiversity expert Prof Madhav Gadgil will chair the advisory committee and Dr CSP Iyer will be convener. The National Steering Committee will be headed by Dr P Pushpangadan (chairman) and Dr J K Sharma (convener). Renowned environmental activist Vandana Siva will be the chairperson of the Congress.

Supported by the National Biodiversity Authority, the Congress will take stock of the current biodiversity profile of the country. It also aims at discussing and developing policies for conservation and sustainable utilisation of biodiversity and strategies and action plans to mainstream biodiversity into policy

making.

Apart from the Biodiversity Expo, the IBC-2010 will have pre-conference workshops, national seminar, national photography exhibition, NGO meet and book fairs. There will be a special section on cultural linkages of biodiversity, highlighting Indian wisdom.

While the efforts are on to include the Western Ghats in the World Heritage List, the Congress will hold a special session on 'Biodiversity Conservation in Western Ghats-Status, Challenges and Opportunities'.

The pre-conference workshops for young researchers, teachers, NGOs and environmental educators will focus on designing and implementing bio-diversity projects, environmental impact assessment and biodiversity education.

The NGO meet, another highlight of the Congress, will provide a common platform for Non-Governmental Organisations, highlighting the need for inclusive action for biodiversity conservation in the country.

For more details of IBC-2010, log on to www.abc2010.org or www.cis-sa.co.in.